

A New Edition, with Corrections and Additions.

THE
SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY,
COMPARED WITH
THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES
IN
GREAT BRITAIN.

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If thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul. *Ezekiel, xxxiii. 9.*

I say unto you, If these should hold their peace, the stones will cry out. *Luke xix. 40.*

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— All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order; how in safety best we may
Compose our *present evils*, with regard
Of what we are, and where! dismissing quite
All thoughts of war: ye have what I advise.

MILTON.

P R E F A C E.

OF the original impression of this pamphlet only *two* copies were sold by the publisher. It is probable, that the edition by *Eaton*, which is this day, *February 15th, 1794*, announced, I see, in the *Morning Chronicle*, is taken from this impression: an edition, delivered to the public without my knowledge, consent, or *approbation*: for, however justifiable it's contents may be in the eye of religion and rectitude, it were folly to suppose me willing to relinquish the profits of my literary labours, on which I principally depend for subsistence, to any

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publisher,

publisher, who may choose audaciously and injuriously to usurp them. I am willing to imitate the *bee* in diligence, but cannot emulate with propriety, and consistently with other obligations, the disinterested labours of that insect :

Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes.

Two pages of this original impression were soon cancelled in succession ; not from any timidity on my part, but in compliance with the suggestions of some friends, to whose judgement this sacrifice was due. With these last alterations the pamphlet continued on sale for a few hours only, when a portion of that *alarm*, which has diffused itself with such general influence among my countrymen, settled on the publisher : in conformity to whose wishes, an entire suppression of the sale took place ; and I had consigned the publication to silence and oblivion. It had been easy for me to have transferred the concern to another publisher, as a variety of bold *adventurers*

venturers in this profession were ready with their services; but, as my intentions were pure, (GOD is witness!) and my views perfectly pacific, I determined, without hesitation, that no prospects, either of popularity or gain, should seduce me to commit my productions to those hands, which are made the vehicles of *sedition* publications, as they are styled, whether justly or not, by the greater part of the community: and I would only allow this pamphlet to take it's chance in the ordinary course of circulation with my other writings and my regular publisher: not from timidity, or a penitential mistrust of what I had written, but simply from a resolution to avoid every appearance of *sedition* intention; than which nothing can be farther from the thoughts of one, who deprecates all violence whatever, and acknowledges no authority but the gentle sway of truth, rectitude, and reason. This is an undisguised narrative of the circumstances attendant on the *first impression* of this pamphlet.

Now

Now it may easily be supposed, that one, whose chief converse is in his closet with the free and intrepid tribes of *venerable dead*, the saints of *Palestine*, the sages, philosophers, and patriots of *Greece* and *Rome*; that one, whose views are of course directed to *absolute truth*, rather than to qualified positions, that may suit the palates of interested statesmen, and a deluded people;—may have erred in the article of *prudence*, and employed expressions, which wise and candid men might disapprove, and which therefore none but a self-sufficient dictator would pertinaciously maintain. And this circumstance may still more reasonably be expected to arise, when groundless pretences of danger to the *constitution*, insinuated by those, who find their interest in maintaining the corruptions of it, have produced a general delusion, *tremblingly alive* to every thing that favours of reformation, or, in the fashionable jargon of ministers and their adherents, of *innovation*, *levelling*,

levelling, and *republicanism* *: especially too with respect to a pamphlet, which was conceived and executed in *half a dozen hours*, and carried to the press within *three hours* after. Since the current sentiments, however, of this little performance were thought calculated for public benefit, as proceeding on different grounds from the generality of political publications, and adapted to the *remnant* (Rom. xi. 5.) of disinterested *Christians* in this country; I resolved to strike out every thing justly exceptionable, to mollify all unnecessary asperities, and leave only what a real believer and sincere professor of the gospel OUGHT to advance in defiance of all consequences, *in season and out of season*, (2 Tim. iv. 2.). What now appears, I will maintain at every hazard; convinced, that the truly virtuous will approve this effort, and that none will

* Deditus profectò grande patientiæ documentum; et, sicut vetus ætas vidit quid ultimum in libertate esset, ita nos quid in servitute; adempto per inquisitiones et loquendi audiendique commercio. Tacitus, vit. Agric, sect. 2.

condemn,

condemn, but those who are condemned themselves by their own principles and practices; and the condemnation of such men shall excite no terrors in me, whatever their authority and station. If the time is come, when *Christians* will not endure the *found doctrine* (Tit. ii. 1.) of their own scriptures; when a preacher of peace, and the bitterest enemy of war and bloodshed in all their forms, is in danger from enforcing the benevolent doctrines of his divine preceptor on men of *like passions* with himself; the time seems also to be come, when some must *suffer*, or even *perish*, *for the people*, (John xviii. 14.). And shall the true disciple of a crucified Saviour shrink appalled from the conflict? When the redeemer of mankind, with perfect resignation to his Father's will, drank off the bitter *cup*, (Matt. xxvi. 39.) of sorrow, which was mixed for him, even to the dregs; shall an humble follower hesitate to trace his steps through this valley of affliction, and share the warfare of the intrepid *captain of his*

his salvation? (Heb. ii. 10.) No event of life can be more honourable in itself, or more productive of genuine felicity, than persecution in the cause of religion and liberty; a felicity without abatement, save that occasioned by a sentiment of sorrow for the tyranny, weakness, and wickedness of his persecutors. I pray for fortitude and perseverance, that *I* never may be one of those unhappy, *lukewarm* (Rev. iii. 16.) professors of the gospel, by whom *the Son of man is betrayed*. (Matt. xxvi. 24.). If the necessities of the season should require, let *me* be a victim in this glorious cause of truth and freedom: and so shall I neither have lived nor died in vain.

This opportunity o frevisal has induced me to intersperse some quotations for the gratification of another class of readers, and with a design of giving a degree of stability, if possible, to the performance; which may ensure it's vitality beyond the fugitive productions of the day; pro-
2 ductions,

ductions, engendered by the hot-bed of political fermentation, and expiring with that violent agency, which gave them birth.

HACKNEY, Feb. 15, 1794.



THE
SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY, &c.

THOSE, who know me personally, will be very ready to bear testimony to the privacy and seclusion of my life; and the last leaf of this little pamphlet will abundantly ascertain to those, who do not know me, that of late, at least, "my "days must have been honestly laborious, and "my nights intensely studious," in a manner utterly inconsistent with clandestine plots against government and all associations with *republicans* and *levellers* for the overthrow of our constitution: but the circumstances of the times impressed my mind with such force; as to impel me with reluctance to interrupt the course of my studies for a few hours, to deliver to the public these cursory reflections arising from some

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palpable

palpable specimens of what appears to me an *anti-christian* spirit. It is my wish and intention, whilst I call things by their true names, to write in conformity to the voice of that religion, whose influence directs and animates my pen on this occasion; but I could not acquit myself to my own conscience for a total silence, upon a reflection, that possibly some individuals at least, into whose hands these remarks might fall, would be led to a serious examination of their sentiments and conduct.

That *prince of peace* (Isaiah ix. 6.), the blessed founder of *Christianity*, declares thus expressly to his disciples: (Luke ix. 56.) *The son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* Now, upon a very moderate computation, since this country engaged in a war with *France*, only *twelve months ago*, *two hundred and fifty-thousand* lives have been lost in the field and on the scaffold; not to mention the numberless afflictions of the living connected with this horrible devastation. I suppose also, that the combined powers on the continent would not have been able to prosecute their hostilities without the interference of this country; and that the shocking murders, which have taken place among the *French* themselves, from that of the King on the throne to the meanest peasant, are truly assignable to that fermentation, which the interference of the same combination has excited.

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These melancholy events may, therefore, be imputed, in a considerable degree, to the secret countenance or open efforts of the misguided administration of this country. And, in the mean time, by what titles do we denominate ourselves? Truly, *Defenders of the Faith*, guardians of the *Protestant* interest, and the professors of a *reformed religion**. *Wars*, *murders*, and *assassinations* are then, it should seem, the proper fruits of a purer profession of *Christianity*; that system of *peace and love*, unlimited and universal, to the whole human race! Be it so! but in *my judgement*, no supposeable circumstance can excuse the shedding of man's blood to a disciple of

* I here solemnly declare, that nothing can be more remote from my intention, than disrespect for the *person* of the sovereign; and that the errors of government, as I deem them, excite in my mind a most unfeigned sorrow. It may readily be presumed, that a student is as much interested in *TRANQUILLITY* as any man; and, however he may wish for radical reformation by *pacific means*, can have but little to hope from *violent revolutions*; where the *still small voice* of letters and philosophy is drowned in the din of arms and the clamours of enthusiasm. If a day of real danger should arrive, courtiers and placemen would be the first to desert their master; and he would find a much safer asylum under the roof of one like myself; who would sacrifice his own life rather than surrender a sacred deposit to his fidelity.

Christ, but an uplifted sword ready to fall on his own head. It is an awful thing to quench that life, which the Creator has breathed into the nostrils of his children: and how lavishly and heedlessly is this treasure squandered in our country by judicial process, as well as military devastation?

Great allowances will be made by every compassionate and candid mind for the situation of *Kings*; surrounded as they are by those, who promote their own interests, from disquising, concealing, and perverting the truth: but, when these *Kings* hear daily the voice of scripture sounding in their ears the accents of peace, love, and mercy; and are presented with a perfect example of holiness and virtue, of humanity and gentleness, in the person of *Jesus of Nazareth*, whom they are taught to revere and imitate; no man whatever, not devoid of rationality, can imagine, that a state of *warfare* with his species is agreeable to the spirit and precepts of that *Gospel*, which proclaimed *peace on earth, and good will to men*: (Luke ii. 14.) Even *Kings*, with *all* the disadvantages of their situation, *MUST KNOW*, that the character of *Saul*, *breathing out threatenings and slaughter* (Acts ix. 1.) against his own brethren, the children of the same parent, can never be conformable to the denomination of a *most gracious*

gracious and most religious sovereign, or acceptable to the King of Kings. The noblest appellation of any monarch is that of *the Father of his people*: one, who considers his subjects as his family; and is, therefore, above all things anxious for their *preservation*. The sacrifice of a subject is to him like sacrificing a portion of himself. There is no *schism* (1 Cor. xii. 25, 26): but, if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it.

In every county, by the commencement of war, commerce is interrupted, trade declines, manufactures cease; thousands are deprived of their subsistence. For the mere support of life, and as a refuge from famine and distress, manufacturers necessarily become soldiers; and from no predilection for the cause. They are led into the field to the deliberate destruction of men, against whom they have not conceived the least emotion of resentment; and whom they hew in pieces without one impulse of private animosity, at the mere instigation of their superiors*. Is it possible to

* *Imminet armorum rabiæ, ferrique potestas
Confundet jus omne manu; scelerique nefando
Nomen erit virtus.* LUCAN, i. 666.

a passage, seriously recommended to the consideration of all *great generals* and *military commanders*: who foolishly imagine, that a harvest of glory may be reaped in a field of battle: men, alack! in the eye of reason and humanity,

— *damn'd to everlasting fame.*

I have

devise a *cale*, more horribly flagitious on the part of their rulers, and more wretchedly abandoned on their own,—more degraded even below brutality itself, than this; if *humanity* be a virtue, if *love* and *good will* the characteristics of *revelation*? Yet this is the frequent condition of *Europeans*! the glorious *Christian* murderers of *heathens* and of *Atheists*! The true follower of *Jesus* weeps bitterly in secret over this insane delusion, this tremendous profligacy, of his species: he wishes for *the wings of a dove*, that he may fly to the wilderness, or the extremities of the creation, from so black and nefarious a spectacle, to be at rest!

I am assured, by a friend, upon the authority of a *Peer* then present, that the *Duke of Portland*, a nobleman celebrated for the mildness of his

I have read in scripture of rewards promised to the *bene-factors* and *saviours* of mankind; but in all my researches through that volume I have not discovered the text, which exposes *a crown of glory, that fadeth not away* (1 Pet. v. 4.) to the defacers and destroyers of the divine similitude, “*ra-tional and immortal man.*” *Parliaments* may recompense the services of generals by *a vote of thanks* and *titular distinctions*; but most unquestionably a recompence, cor-respondent to the operations of these services, would be *weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Math. viii. 12.). I conclude this note in the solemn words of the chief Apostle: (Gal. xi. 7.) *Do not deceive yourselves: God is not mocked: what a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

virtues and his amiable manners, and, I am persuaded, most deservedly; declared in the *House of Lords*, that "the present war was necessary for the support and defence of the *Christian Religion*!" To what, in common charity, can we impute so strange a sentiment, but to a wretched infatuation, engendered by timidity and false alarm; or to a most piteous imbecility of understanding, with respect to the point in discussion? Will this noble person condescend to single out one *action* in the life of *Christ*, one *precept* of *his* lips, which countenances this singular persuasion; that the religion of the gospel can be defended and propagated by the *sword*? When *Peter*, laudably zealous for the safety of his master's person, drew *his* sword in the defence (Matthew xxi. 52.) of *Jesus*; he received no approbation for the vigour of his interference, but a gentle and magnanimous rebuke: *Put up again thy sword into his place! for all they, that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.* A rebuke, which the same mouth would have given, and will one day give, to the *Peer* in question.

The former part of our Lord's reproof was applicable to *Peter* only; the latter conveys a momentous denunciation, pregnant with genuine alarm, to all the *destroyers* of *mankind*; from the petty ravager, to the mighty potentate. It were

good

good, possibly, for these wasters of the best works of the Creator, had they never been born (Matth. xxvi. 24.). It were better for them, if they could atone in *this life*; by the shedding of their own blood, for the blood of thousands and tens of thousands, that is crying against them for vengeance from the earth: if, after slaying with the *sword*, they could *perish with the sword*; and thus escape the retribution of a more awful sentence, that awaits, upon the authority of *Christ* himself, the rebels to his gentle and pacific reign, at his second coming to judge the earth. *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* (Luke xix. 27.)*

My old friend, *Dr. Pearce* the *Master*, with the Fellows of *Jesus College, Cambridge*, of which number I once was myself:—my old friend *Dr. Milner*, Master of *Queen's College*, in the same University, and the fellows of that society;—go to *Chapel* (it is a reasonable supposition, reader! for the construction of an argument, though the *Master* and *Fellows* are that portion of collegial societies which least regard the public services of

* Compare too *Revelations* xiii. 10. which passage reads a lecture also to the patrons and practitioners of the *Slave-trade*; that edifying traffic of this virtuous and religious nation!

religion;

religion; *I speak what I know, and testify what I have seen*) the Masters and Fellows, I say, of these respective colleges; go to chapel, can read with approbation the wisdom of Gamaliel's advice; (Act^s, v. 38.) *Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for, if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found even to fight against God* :—they can hear, with surprise and indignation, that *Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and people of Israel, gathered together, to crush truth, and to destroy opinions*; by demolishing the persons of *Christ and his Apostles*: they can listen with reverence to the commands of *Jesu*; *Gather not up the tares; (M^{att}. xiii. 29.) lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them; but let both grow together until the harvest*:—they can hear the declaration of a chief apostle; (2 Tim. iii. 12.) *All, that will live godly in Christ Jesu, shall suffer persecution*; a declaration, conformable to a previous prediction of his master; (John, xvi. 2.) *They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service*:—these reverend Masters and Fellows, I say; these protestants against *Popish* tyranny and persecution, these professors of reformed Christianity; can come with such precepts of *Jesu* and his *Apostles* in their ears and mouths, and deprive, in one case, *Mr. Frend*, of

the chief advantages of his *fellowship*, by banishment from *College*; and in the other, *Mr. Palmer*, of his *Fellowship* altogether; possibly the only means of subsistence to these gentlemen; and consign men of education, inured to the decent comforts and conveniences of life, to the casualties of benevolent commiseration! Surely *Mr. Palmer's* usage* as a *criminal*, with *the iron entering into his soul*, and a transportation of *seven* long years to the *Antipodes* themselves, constituted a *sufficient* punishment for his *offence*. But *Pandæmonium* was not satisfied. *Dr. Milner*, and his coadjutors, that most evangelical fraternity! yearned, in their godly jealousy for *church* and *king*, to finish this work of edifying chastisement; to give good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over into their brother's bosom! Is this the meekness and gentleness of *Christ*? (2 Cor. x. i.) Are these the tender sympathies of men, who remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them;

* I have lately been urging some gentlemen, acquainted with the circumstances of *Mr. Palmer's* life, (who was bred at *Eton* and *Cambridge*, and has distinguished himself by some excellent papers in the *Theological Repository*, and other writings) to communicate a few particulars to the public: that the world may know, with what humanity he was put into *irons* and is now sent to prosecute his *theological studies* at *Botany Bay*: that *bourne*, whence no traveller returns. This will certainly be done.

and those that suffer affliction, as being themselves also in the body? (Heb. xiii. 3.) Is this THEIR cup of cold water (Matth. x. 42) for the fainting disciple of their master, who lived and died for our benefit; and made love the characteristic of his brethren? I should prefer, I confess, for my own part, religious worship in Rimmon's temple, or a Mahometan Mosque, to the service of a Cambridge chapel with Christians of this black complexion: and I would give with rapture to a French Deist, as purity and perfection, compared with such apostates to the liberty and sanctity of the gospel, the right hand of fellowship. Oh! my soul! come not thou into their secret (Gen. xlix. 6.).

I observed, on passing the other day through St. Paul's Church-yard, a Sermon, occasioned by the execution of the French Queen, from a most excellent person, equally respectable for his abilities and virtues, the Rev. Thomas Rennell, Prebendary of Winchester: a sermon big with denunciation of woes and destruction on the French. I can excuse a generous and feeling mind some warmth of honest indignation at such an ungenerous, unmanly, and savage action*; but, at the same time, I would

* When the French changed their government, they should have suffered the Queen to return, if she preferred it, to her own country. She might reasonably have said with *Aeneas* in *Virgil*,

ask my friend, upon whose authority, as a *Christian* preacher, he employs the language, that inflames that, and even his former, publication? Can he, with his good sense, suppose for a single moment, that the *meek and lowly Nazarene*, (Matt. xi. 29.) will approve those menaces, which even the preacher himself must feel shocked at imagining that *Christ* could use? *He* did not *imprecate*, but *wept bitterly*, even over that ungrateful, that corrupt, that persecuting, that bloody city, *Jerusalem* herself; *Jerusalem*, the deliberate, and malicious, and insulting murderer, with all the mockery of a judicial process, of it's greatest benefactor and best citizen, our *Lord himself*. *His* language, on every occasion, was not the language of denunciation, asperity and bitterness; but of poignant sympathy, of disinterested emotion, of compassionate distress: *If thou hadst known* (Luke xix. 42.) *at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace!* *Alas!* for thee, *Chorazin! alas!* for thee, *Be not righteous always, and do not thy neighbour wrong* *Glory to God in the highest* *non haec in fæder a veni: bus eow* *“I came hither on other terms.”* I have been informed, how truly I cannot say, that this offer was made: but she magnanimously declared her resolution to share the fortunes of her husband.

nullum memorabile nomen
Fæmineâ in pœnâ est, nec habet victoria laudem.

Bethsaida

Bethsaida! (Matt. xi. 21.) Has then the palpable darkness, that overspreads this land, penetrated also into the dwellings of the *Israelites*? *Seeing do they not see? and hearing, do they not hear?**

* If the didactic theology of church dignitaries in general be of this complexion, and the melioration of humanity be designed by providence, we may charitably hope, that the last race are slumbering in their stalls and palaces: especially if it be remembered, that *the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*: (Matth. xx. 28.) Delightful godlike declaration! unexampled in the history of religious teachers; and demonstrative, independently of other proof, of the divinity of our Saviour's character. We may venture to address each individual of this *spiritual noblesse* with the valediction of *Anchises*:

*Jamque vale! torquet medios nox humida cursus;
Et te saevus equis oriens afflavit anhelis:*

i. e. in scripture phraseology, *The night is far spent: the day is at hand:* (Rom. xiii. 12.)

But, if *ecclesiastical reformation* were committed to my hands, I would not copy the example of the *French*:

“ *Life flashing Bently with his desperate hook;*”

but the contrary. Not one living wight of the *order of Melchisedec*, from his Grace at *Lambeth* to the most ignoble curate in the *Metropolis*, should be deprived, by my consent, of his preferment for his life. Even *Reformation* itself would be dearly purchased at the expence of comfort to so many amiable conscientious men, and excellent scholars, as may be found undoubtedly in the *Church of England*.

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Had my friend so little recollection of the records of salvation; so little feeling of that spirit, which characterises the followers of the *Nazarene*, that *he* must emulate *James* and *John* in preference to *Jesus*; that *he* must set the disciples *above* their master, and *call down fire from heaven to consume the French Samaritans*? And for what does he make himself a *judge* instead of a *hearer* of the law? because they revile and reject the *christianity* forsooth! professed in this godly kingdom; and of which our preacher's own sermon is, I suppose, the delicious fruits!!! A thousand arguments convince *me* that the religion *established* and taught in this country is a genuine part of that *grand apostacy*, a *limb* of that *antichrist*, predicted in the scriptures; but I will offer to the understanding of my friend, but *one* argument to this effect, deduced from those very scriptures: which argument, to my apprehension, if it be delusive, those scriptures themselves are no more than a *cunningly devised fable*. It is this; and, if I err in this point, I will gladly retract my error, and thank cordially the man, who shall detect it.

Our Lord, (Matt. xiii. 31.) compares the *gospel*, to a *grain of mustard-seed*; which, from being the *least of all seeds*, becomes at length the *greatest among herbs*, and *a tree*; so that the *birds of the air* come and *lodge in the branches of it*. He compares

pares it also, (ver. 33.) to leaven, hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened: and in another evangelist (Mark iv. 27.), to seed, cast into the ground, which springs and grows up a man know's not how: producing FIRST the blade, THEN the ear, AFTER THAT the full corn in the ear.

Now it must, I think, be acknowledged, that the prominent idea in *all* the parables of this nature, is that, of a gradual progression to maturity. Accommodate this inference to the fact itself, the propagation of *Christianity* through the world. If we consider, that large and most populous portions of *Asia* and *Africa* were filled with *professing Christians* in the *fourth Century*, when our religion was the *established religion* of the *Roman empire*; countries, where the *Mahometan* crescent has long insulted the fallen ruins of the *Christian Churches*, and added even part of *Europe* to it's usurpations; we shall see reason to conclude, if I mistake not, that the number of *nominal Christians*, as distinguished by outward *professions* and *establishments*, has rather declined, than increased, for the last *fourteen centuries*. Now reconcile me, who can, upon this single argument alone, a *profession* of religion, which in it's propagation is at least *stationary*, and perhaps *retrograde*, to the express declarations of scripture *prophecy* and the genuine *Christianity* of the *Gospel*.

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This argument is capable also of another application. *Philosophy* and *experience* alike pronounce that all total revolutions of opinion, and every essential change of manners must be *gradual*, and *slowly progressive*: such, therefore, must necessarily be the propagation of *Christian* truth, countervailing by gentle and continued influence the passions and prejudices of mankind. But *Christianity*, as measured by *outward profession*, soon attained a fulness of stature, which it has not exceeded to this very day. Therefore such *Christianity* is of spurious growth; a mere unsubstantial excrescence from the carcase of *Civil Power*; an excrescence too, that will effect it's own destruction by draining the vitality of it's supporter.

The truth, I presume, is this: The worshippers of *Baal* have been *always* *numerous*; the servants of *Jehovah* and his *Christ*, comparatively *few*; *seven thousand* only, among the myriads of the earth: but *this number*, I am perfuaded, has been *gradually increasing*, and will increase more and more unto the perfect day: that day, when the combined evidence of prophecy and history will be necessary to convince a regenerated world of this wondrous truth: that men, who stile themselves *Christian preachers*, the friends of *order* and *good government*, the guardians of *religion* and *law*, could blow up the trumpet of war in

Sion;

Sion; could call forth their evangelical congregations to desolate the globe with torrents of human blood: and think themselves, all this time, the ministers of *Christ*! who fed his flock like a shepherd: who gathered the lambs with his arm, and carried them in his bosom: who gently led those that were with young: (*Isaiah xl. ii.*)

Again: these preachers call forth all the rhetoric of the schools in describing the enormities of the *French republicans*. Doubtless, that country has become a theatre of dreadful massacre and devastation:

Effects unhappy from a generous cause!

And to what origin may these horrors be reasonably assigned? to the armies, most unquestionably, that have invaded their territories, and threatened their capital with military execution. This combination has fomented their divisions; this has given vigour to the private animosities of their several factions, and called forth all their fury, by hunting them down, like beasts for the slaughter. Their crimes, so exaggerated and sounded forth, are *occasional* and *incidental*; stricken out by the violent collisions of such an unprecedented conflict; which has given full scope to all the prejudices and passions of outraged humanity.

The wickedness of our own country, on the other hand, is of a *deliberate* and *systematic* kind; abundantly transcending all the enormities of the *French*. Who will deny, that *we* have sacrificed in the *East**¹, by war and famine (to say nothing of the world of wretchedness brought upon the living) in the course of our tyrannies in that region, more lives than *France* contains? that *we* have deprived the *West Indians* of their territory, and extirpated their race? that *we* have enslaved and slaughtered, and are daily slaughtering and enslaving, more sons of *Africa*, than can easily be numbered? that *we* are betraying and butchering, in our attempts of protection, the *royalists* of *France*†? that *we* carry plague and pestilence, misery and ruin, through the universe? Yet we dwell with the complacency of innocence,

* It appears from the travels of *Sir Thomas Herbert* in the last century, and doubtless from other authentic documents, that our early navigators to the *East*, were a set of pirates and cut-throats, plundering and murdering every thing, that they could master, in those parts. Whether subsequent adventurers have learned a better lesson, I have no evidence to ascertain.

† I know from an *eye-witness*, that our attempt upon *Martinique* occasioned such misery and such sacrifices, as no reader of the least sensibility could hear without an agony of distress; and from *ear-witnesses*, that the *French Royalists* in this country speak with execration of the treachery of Ministers.

on our own *happy government* and *reformed church*, in contrast with the *Atheism* and murders of the *French*? How shall I determine, which exceeds in baseness; our profligacy, or our hypocrisy? It must be, that some signal judgements are laid up in store for such a flagitious system; nor is it easy to conceive, how they could fall upon it, unless the heart were *hardened* in this course of wickedness and folly. A lamentable fact! which our present conduct evinces, I think, to demonstration.

In the mean time, our political ministers, who are rioting, with additional intemperance, on the spoils of the public, in an hour pregnant with calamity and distress, may delude the people with an idle vociferation of *anarchy* and *atheism*, on one hand, and the *blessings* of *our constitution*, on the other: the *bishop* of *Durham*, in the fulness of *disinterested conviction*, and with the liberality of his *father's spirit**, may harangue the wondering *Palatinate* on the *happiness* and *comforts* of his country: our *Dignitaries* of the *Church*, who so freely give what they received freely, may ful-

* The late *Lord Barrington*, if I mistake not; author of that valuable work, the *Miscellanea Sacra*; the illustrious defender of religious liberty, the great patron of the *dissenters*, and their chief advocate for the repeal of the *Test-laws*.

minate, from their *stalls* and *pulpits*, *holy anathemas* against *atheists* and *republicans*, for the good of their souls; instead of *prayers* and *benedictions* in behalf of their supposed errors:—alas! what will the *verbera linguae**—the *stripes of the tongue* avail, against the blow of an *OMNIPOTENT ARM*, which is already smiting the *oppressors of the earth*?

The apostle *Paul* lays it down as a necessary qualification for the office of a *bishop*, that he be *no striker, nor a brawler*: (1 Tim. iii. 3.) Have the *prelates of England and Ireland* proved the legitimacy of their appointment to *Bishoprics* by these essential characters? Have *they* appeared, in their capacities of *Dioceſans* and *Senators*, as the advocates of *peace* and *suffering humanity*? Have *they* exerted their eloquence, and lent their suffrage, to stem the career of madness and fanaticism, which are again letting slip the dogs of a *holy war* to lay waste the globe? Do not *all* our *bishops*, without an individual exception, by their silence at least, and unresisting acquiescence, countenance these horrid scenes of ferocity and carnage, and thereby abjure every pretence to the name and character of *Christian*? For *what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?* (2 Cor. ix. 5.)

* Hor. Od. iii. 12. 3.

or his garments rolled in blood, with the white raiment (Revel. iii. 18.) of the saints? What agreement have the blasphemies of soldiers and the confused noise in the battle of the warrior (Isaiah ix. 5.), with the sounds of grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ? (1 Tim. i. 2.) And when we think of one prelate in particular, *instinct with fire and nitre*, my *Lord of Rochester*, I mean; can we forbear associating with that idea, the lines of *Milton*?

on the other side

Incens'd with indignation Satan stood
 Unterrify'd; and, like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
 Shakes Pestilence and War.

Let this redoubtable champion of *hierarchical usurpation* exchange his crozier for a *Parisian pike*, and his *sword of the spirit* (Eph. vi. 17.) for a well-tempered *weapon* of true *carnal steel*: and prick forth on his *pale horse* (Revel. vi. 8.) to bear down *republicans* and *atheists*!

Themselves, or their advocates, have my leave to reconcile such conduct, if they can, with the patterns and precepts of the *Christian dispensation*: but certainly this conduct of our *Bishops* would have been perfectly consistent, if, instead of

of the present readings in our bibles, the direction of *Christ* to *Peter* (John xxi. 15, 16.) had been: **FLEECE** *my sheep*;—**MURDER** *my lambs*:

But, what fills up, in my opinion, the measure of impiety, and leaves it incapable of aggravation, is, the observance of a *solemn fast*; to implore, truly, the assistance of the Almighty in destroying his own image, and desolating his own creation*! No energies of language, that I have in store, can delineate *my* sense of this sacrilegious profanation of religion. We must refer the unutterable conception of it to *expressive silence* and secret feeling. I wonder less at the *clergy* of the *establishment*, who are accustomed to the trammels of subjection, with the lash of *episcopal* jurisdiction waving over them, for *their* compliance with this unholy mandate; but that *dissenters* can prevail upon themselves thus to *prostitute religion* at the command of secular interest and ambition, is indeed a most deplorable inconsistency! and much confirms me in my persuasion of that general *antichristianism*, which

* “ What can we conceive so horrid, as the blasphemous idea of *wheedling* the Almighty to become a party in the *diabolical* contentions and *throat-cutting matches* of the great men of this little less than, *infernal world*? ” Edward Williams, the Welch Bard, in a note at p. 163. of vol. ii. of his Poems just published.

overspreads this country. But they must stand or fall to their own master : and of him may they find mercy in that day !

In harmony with the mild and patient temper of that religion, which he was appointed to proclaim, the Apostle *Paul* observes, (2 Cor. xiii. 8.) that *we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth*: intending, doubtless, to insinuate the folly, inefficacy, and wickedness of all opposition, and especially of malicious and violent opposition, to the propagation and influence of Truth: all mankind, therefore, and *magistrates* among the rest, should contentedly resign her to the gentle activities of Reason and the passive tutelage of Time. *Truth* and *Rectitude*, those glorious emanations from the fountain of *infinite perfection* for the benefit of the human race, must finally prevail; because the divine will has immutably determined the final happiness of his creatures. Consult History, ask Experience, appeal to the Common Sense of the lowest individual, not destitute of rationality; and you will find in all ages, and in every breast, an unanimous conviction, that *Error* and *Villainy* alone employ force and secrecy to confirm their cause and secure their authority. Conscious Integrity suborns no *spies*, listens to no *informers*, fears no antagonist; but ever challenges discovery and discussion. It is with

with the intellect and it's objects, as with morality. The position of *Christ* is alike applicable to either instance: (John iii. 20.) *He, that doeth evil, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light; lest his deeds be brought to conviction: but he, that doeth the truth, cometh to the light; that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God**.

Indeed the *Gospel* itself is but one branch from the main stem of *universal Truth*: and who, but *ruffians* that *delight in war*; (Psalms lxviii. 30.)—who, but *furious fanatics, Clergy of establishments, and depraved Statesmen*, ever yet talked of crushing *Atheism*, and promoting *Christianity*, by the *sword*?

Apply now these criterions of *Truth* and *Virtue* to the measures of the *British Government*. Freedom of enquiry, so far from being challenged in confidence of the justice of their plans and the boasted purity of their constitution†; is suppressed by the

* κλεψτων γαρ η νεξ, της δ' αληθειας το φως: Euripides Iph. T. 1026.

“ *Thieves* love the gloom of night, but *Truth* the sun.”

† We are told, that the excellence of the *British Constitution* consists in the happy equipoise of *three estates, Kings, Lords, and Commons*. I ask: “ What do you mean by “ *Commons*? ” A representation of the people. “ Is the “ present *House of Commons* a representation of the people? ”

summary confutation of *penalties* and *prosecutions*: argument is not opposed by argument, but repelled and silenced by *fines* and *imprisonments*. Is this the demeanour of reasonable beings, conscious of upright views, and confiding in honest actions? Is this rectitude of conduct? Are these the ways of *integrity* and *truth*? No: a more decisiv demonstration cannot possibly be exhibited of a corrupt and pernicious scheme of things; of an administration unprincipled in it's character, and injurious in it's effects. It is shocking to reflect upon the grievous sufferings inflicted on meritorious members of society, and in them on their families, relatives, and friends, for those freedoms of speech, which virtuous ministers and well con-

No man, not even a *Reevian* associator, will assert this! So that the existence of the very circumstance, which constitutes in their own statement the great excellencie of our government, is by a palpable contradiction absolutely given up. In truth *Tacitus* was right; and no government, so blended, as this principle supposes, with proportionate ingredients of *Royalty*, *Aristocracy* and *Democracy*, ever did, or ever can, subsist: and Ministers act like true *children of this world, wise in their generation*, (Luke xvi. 8.) when they resist a reform of *Parliament*: for, let the *Commons* be a complete representation of the people,—and good night to *Monarchy*! Ministers ought in gratitude to confer upon me some of their good sinecures, a *Toulon* pension, or at least a handsome gratuity privately conveyed, for giving them, like a friend, this timely warning.

stituted governments would invite rather than discourage, for the rectification of obliquities, produced inevitably by time, and inseparable from human institutions. The *Duke of Richmond* and *Mr. Pitt* can acquiesce, with heedless indifference or sullen obduracy, in the imprisonment and ruin of *Mr. Holt*, for reprinting *verbatim* a treatise, which they themselves have, at least virtually, approved, recommended, and contributed to disperse: a degree this, in my opinion, of hardened apostacy, when considered in all it's circumstances, that can scarcely be exceeded*. And yet, when such conduct in private life would blast the character for ever, these men, of unblushing faces and unfeeling hearts, continue in high estimation with the majority of my countrymen; who exhibit thereby a depravity not much inferiour to that, which I wish to stigmatise, and recommend to the abhorrence of men of honour, and the execrations of posterity.

It was their duty to interfere with the execution of so harsh a sentence; and, if their interposition had been ineffectual, to have declared

* οἱ μοι, κακούργους ανδρας, ὡς αἱ στυγη
οἱ συγτίθεντες τάδικ', οὐτα μηχανας
κεσμενοι.

Euripides, Ion. v. 850.

their disapprobation to the world, by relinquishing a co-operation that branded their characters with an indelible mark of inconsistency and inhumanity*.

Alas! gentle and pacific reform seems too great a blessing to be vouchsafed to this hypocritical and depraved people; and the hearts of our descendants will overflow with gratitude to the Supreme controller of events for educating such good from evil, by sending this *heaven-born* minister, as his chosen instrument, to hasten the melioration of our political condition through the only means which our folly has made practicable; those storms and tempests, with which the horizon is already blackened. Dreadful, but necessary remedies, in the course of divine appointment, to rescue the ocean from stagnation, and the atmosphere from pestilence!

To the fact, which I now proceed to mention, no text of scripture is exclusively appropriate: it opposes every dictate of religion; it outrages every feeling of humanity. We affect a prodigious abhorrence at the murder of the King of

* ————— Phalaris licet imperet, ut sis
Falsus, et admoto dicit perjuria tauri,
Summum crede nefas animam præferre pudori,
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

Juvenal, viii. 82.

France: we commence war immediately on that event; as if to appease his *manes* by immolating thousands of our countrymen at his sepulchre. Yet *La Fayette*, a gentleman of unsullied honour, of disinterested patriotism, and sterling worth; the best friend of that unhappy monarch, at the hazard of life itself, and all it's comforts, is suffered to languish in the dungeon of a ruffian tyrant, our beloved and immaculate ally! There needs no colouring of language to aggravate this diabolical barbarity: it is sufficiently exposed by a simple statement. Have the powers of this country interceded for his enlargement? It is impossible, Their interference would have been instantly successful. What punishment then were adequate to such a crime*?

Alas! for them, says the prophet (Isaiah v. 20.) that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter: i. e. who pervert the names, and to the best of their power, the

* The kind and affectionate language, with which Mr. Fox urged this topic in the *House*, does infinite honour to his benevolence. This, in union with numberless demonstrations more of a heart overflowing with the milk of human kindness, has engraven his name in lasting characters on the memory of every advocate for suffering humanity.

realities of things, in subservience to their own profligate undertakings. Thus our audacious ministry connive at the *royal banditti* in their dismemberment of *Poland*, and at the same time co-operate with these *men of blood* against the *French* to prevent *their* encroachments, truly, on the *Dutch*! Let us hear no more of *heathen* monsters; your *Caligulas*, your *Neros*, and *Domitians*! or rather turn your eyes for relief to them from the more hideous and oppressive spectacle of *Christian* statesmen.

If thine enemy hunger, says the benignity of apostolic doctrine, (Rom. xii. 20.) *feed him*: *if he thirst*, *give him drink*. Nay, *Paul*! thou art beside thyself! rejoins the *apocrypha* of our heaven-born minister and his celestial associates. It is our duty to *starve* the *French*: not only the *regicides* and *atheists*, but the whole of this accursed nation; root and branch, male and female, declining age and helpless infancy. An achievement, at which, from a consciousness of inferior demerit, *Beelzebub* himself would blush, and which *Moloch* would emulate in vain. In that awful period,

“When blended lie th’ oppreſſor and th’ oppreſſ’d;” or in the nobler solemnity of scripture language, when *mortality* shall be swallowed up in *life*, (2 Cor. v. 4.); with what transport will the children

children of universal and undistinguishing benevolence, to which national antipathies are unknown, acknowledge the gracious accents of their judge! *I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Come, ye blessed of my father! inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!* (Matt. xxv. 34.)

I cannot conclude these reflections without adverting to the monstrous absurdity, and the unspeakable inconsistency, of *Mr. Fox* and his adherents, (whose conduct in other respects is so manly and patriotic), in countenancing and supporting the *vigorous prosecution* of a war, which they *condemn*. How is it, that they blame the measures of government, and yet assist and strengthen the execution of their purposes? As if I should encourage a sanguinary ruffian, who had smitten an inoffensive passenger wantonly and unjustly, to fall upon him most unmercifully, and demolish him outright! No: it is certainly their duty, as consistent senators, to oppose every measure of administration, that may contribute to the success of their military operations. Truth and Rectitude will not accommodate themselves to human policies and national regards: they are of peremp-

peremptory obligation, universal, unchangeable, and eternal.

Finally: I profess myself a *son of peace*; a lowly and insignificant, but conscientious, follower of that *saviour*, at whose coming *peace* was *sung* (Luke ii. 14.), and at whose departure, *peace* was *bequeathed* (John xiv. 27.). No consideration, I humbly hope, not even of life itself, but in personal defence, could induce *me* to shed the blood of a fellow-creature, even of a *continental tyrant*: nor could any motive, but that of a strong sense of duty, have impelled me to come forward to the public on this occasion. But there is a season, when inactivity were a crime; and public admonition, even at the hazard of personal comforts, rises into an *indispensable obligation*; to those at least, who are desirous that their master should not be *ashamed of them* (Mark viii. 38.) at his second coming. I am expecting with trembling solicitude, amidst the incessant occupations of a literary life, that alarming catastrophe, which *the signs of the times* indicate, in my mind, to be rapidly approaching; prepared to *act or suffer*, to *live and die*, in the service of *Christianity*; which is no other, than the cause of *Liberty*, and the consequent happiness of the human race: a liberty and happiness only to be raised on the foundation of that *equality* ascertained by the laws of our *creation*, and ratified by

the *gospel* in every page, which acknowledges no distinction of *bond* or *free*. Interest may oppose, and Sophistry may cavil ; but *Equality*, in it's rational acceptation, as relating to civil privileges, and impartial laws, is interwoven with *Christianity* itself: they must live or perish together. But they will live ; and modern governments, with every appendage of wickedness and corruption, will flee in time from their genial influence, as beasts of prey, to their dens of rapine and darkness, from the rising sun.

F I N I S.

The following testimony to this little publication, from a LADY of extraordinary merit, whose name I do not think myself at liberty to mention, is so honourable to her own feelings and so creditable to myself, that she will excuse me, I am persuaded, for my wish to gratify the reader by it's insertion here.

Impressed

Impressed with sentiments of the sincerest veneration and esteem, from the perusal of Mr. Wakefield's "Spirit of Christianity, compared with the Spirit of the Times," I cannot forbear expressing an unaffected tribute of respect for the generous advocate of truth and humanity: who, fearless of "evil times and evil tongues," dares to step forward in a sycophant and venal age, and bear an intrepid testimony against oppression, cruelty, and "spiritual wickedness in high places." "The night seems indeed far spent and the day at hand:" yet, in our progress to perfect civilization, much, it is to be feared, still remains to be done, and much previously to be endured! If nations, like individuals, must be purified by sufferings—and such, judging by analogy, appears to be the mysterious plan of Providence—can we help recoiling? But, while I confess that the convictions of my understanding, are, at times, overpowered by the more importunate suggestions of sensibility; I must ever admire and honour the united efforts of genius, eloquence, and integrity, in the cause of reason and philanthropy: yet is my admiration mixed with a painful solicitude, lest another victim should be added to the magnanimous list of political martyrs, whose names and sufferings, while "inspiring glory through remotest times," will leave an indelible stain on the annals of the eighteenth century.





